

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4-11 are pending. Claims 1, 4 and 11 have been amended. The amendment should be entered as it does not raise new issues that require further search and/or consideration. No new matter has been presented.

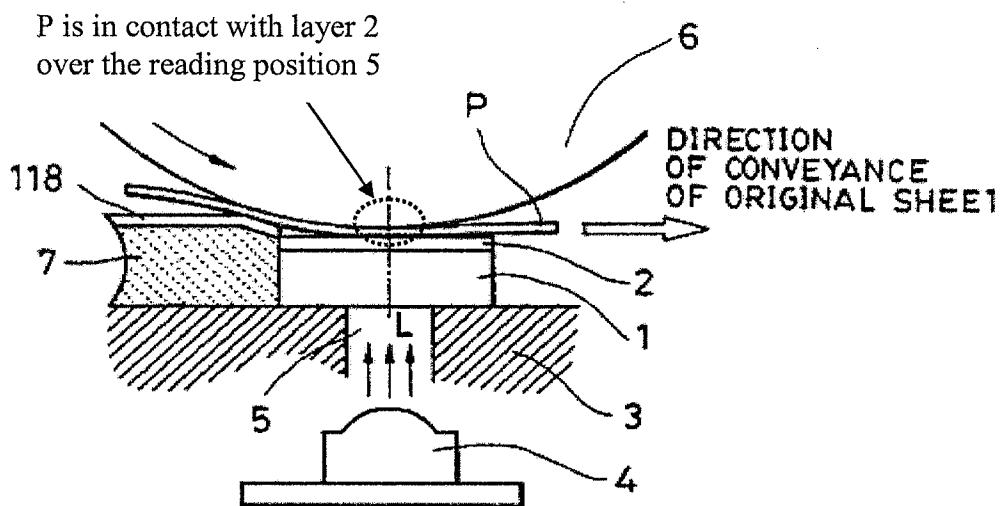
Claims 1 and 4-11 are rejected as being unpatentable under 35 USC 103(a) over Takuya, JP Patent Publication No. 2001-223832 A, in view of Kitani, U.S. Patent No. 5,352,883. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 4 and 11 have been amended to recite “wherein the spacer is configured to cause a first portion of the original document to be out of contact with the reading transparent member at a location over the original document reading position and a second portion of the original document to be in contact with the reading transparent member at a location downstream from the original document reading position relative to the original document conveyance direction as at least a portion of the original document is conveyed over the original document reading position and a trailing edge portion of the original document passes a position very close to or in contact with a sloping surface of the spacer.” This amendment is supported by figures 2 and 6 and paragraph [0034] of the specification. This feature is not taught by the combination of Takuya and Kitani.

The Examiner compares this feature with Figs. 10 and 11 of Kitani, asserting that the paper is out of contact with the substrate 1. However, the substrate 1 in Kitani does not correspond to the claimed “reading transparent member” because the substrate 1 in Kitani is at no point in contact with the paper P, whereas the claimed “reading transparent member” is required to be in contact with “a second portion of the original document ... downstream from the original document reading position.”

If the claimed “reading transparent member” were compared to the layer 2 instead of substrate 1 of Kitani, as shown in Figs. 10 and 11, Kitani would still fail to teach or suggest this

feature. That is because layer 2 of Kitani is in contact with the original document P at a location over the original document reading position (see Fig. 11 of Kitani shown below), whereas the claimed "reading transparent member" is required to be out of contact with "a first portion of the original document ... at a location over the original document reading position." Thus, Kitani fails to teach or suggest this feature.



Accordingly, claims 1, 4 and 11 are allowable. Claims 5-10 depend from claim 4 and are similarly allowable.

In view of the above, each of the claims in this application is in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection

with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket no.
325772034600.

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Respectfully submitted,

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